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TAB - B Interim Novel Weapons Policy Guidance - The Reduction of Panic Effect

1. a. The panic effect of statements about novel weapons can be reduced by:

- (1) Repetition. This can be accomplished under policy controls by authorizing low-level government officials to make frequent statements, in accordance with national policy guidance.
- (2) Wide publicity, within security limits, of the tactical uses for novel weapons.
- (3) Wide publicity, in optimistic tones, of the state of our air defenses.

b. The public will become accustomed, in normal periods, to the fact of novel weapons. However, when crisis events occur where war or peace is in the balance, there will probably be widespread panic tendencies which will have a crippling effect on freedom of policy decision if not controlled. At such times, high-level statements must be made, which:

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- (1) Re-assure about the quality of our air defenses (with secondary deterrent effect on the USSR).
  - (2) Assure that the USSR will attack only military targets. (Thus heightening the moral guilt should they violate, while at the same time reducing panic fear).
  - (3) Assure West European audiences that defense plans call for the selective use of novel weapons in East Europe, and for holding as far to the east as practicable.
  - (4) Statements which vaguely imply (without commitment) that we will bomb only military targets, and will use selective weapons in congested areas.

Note: the above guidance is not to be construed as absolving officials of their responsibility for obtaining security clearance for statements prepared in conformity thereto.

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